

Back in early August, I asked Dan Wilken, our Assistant Manager for Administration, to put together a working group to look at options for work schedules and to recommend possible courses of action we could take to help minimize the impact of rising fuel prices. As part of their effort, the working group conducted a survey in which nearly half of the federal workforce participated. I thank each of you who did take part in that survey.

The working group reported the results of their efforts to me last week and made recommendations that I fully agree with. I will discuss these more fully in our next Quarterly Employee Meeting on October 22, but for now I wanted to give you a snapshot of what we're going to do.

The results of the survey support a decision to make better use of a number of options already available to federal staff, and to expand those options to supervisors and managers, with the exception of Senior Executive Service personnel. Those options include expanded use of the current alternate work schedule and our current telecommuting program. Supervisors will be encouraged to take full advantage of all the flexibilities available in current programs, with particular emphasis on use of Credit Time, when considering employees' requests for work schedule modifications. Of course, the needs of the Department, including productivity and work requirements, must remain a top priority. Toward that end, the working group unanimously agreed that the supervisor must be in the position of approving individual requests.

I have asked the Human Resources Division to prepare refresher training for supervisors and timekeepers so we can be certain that they fully understand all of the available options and any restrictions or provisions that are associated with them. I also want to convey my expectation that all the flexibilities inherent in our current system are considered.

We will be adjusting our practices to accommodate supervisors who were not previously covered by AWS, and this should be available to them shortly. In the meantime, please be patient when requesting differing schedules as I am sure implementing our expectations may take some time.

Gerald Boyd
Manager